[For the text in French of the Electoral Law of 1950 for Lebanon see 57: Davis, Ml Middle East, category 116, pp. 307-319.]

Royal Institute of International Affairs [illegible]

...ppo and to his obvious affinities with General Naguib of Egypt whom he visited later in the year.

The threat of Zionism is considered very real in Syria and Shishakli has declared that Syria has not given up hope of a revision of the present position. Between March and May 1951 a flare-up over Lake Huleh brought an offer of troops and to Syria, but hostilities between Syria and Israel were localized and stilled without leading to a general outbreak of war. All Syrians wish Israel ill; fear of Israeli expansion remains real and is fostered by the Government.

In internal politics, the most progressive measures which have yet been considered are land reform and the partition of state lands. There is little unrest among the people, who generally want to live their lives without undue government interference. Nationalism of two kinds exists: a nascent patriotism that has for the first time the support of the rulers, and a narrow anti-pluralism that, while less extreme than in Egypt, is more pronounced in Syria than in Lebanon.

(2) LEBANON

Lebanon is a republic of which the Chamber of Deputies was till 1951 elected by direct manhood suffrage but in that year women were permitted to vote in the election. By convention, the President of the Republic must be a Christian and is normally a Maronite, the Prime Minister must be a Sunni Muslim and the President of the Chamber a Shi'i Muslim. The table on p. 486 above shows the division of parliamentary seats between the religious sects; a scrupulous observance of these quotas is evident even in the civil service establishment. The existence of a Christian majority is held to be essential for the survival of Lebanon as a separate state and so, in June 1951, it was found convenient to extend the franchise to Lebanese abroad (of whom the majority are Christian) and to increase the number of deputies from 55 to 77, but in November 1951, under a new electoral law, the number was reduced to 99. The Muslim rate of natural increase is higher than that of the Christians and it is probably for this reason that no census has been taken since. In other ways the constitution and administration are similar to those of Syria already described.

Internal Politics

As in Syria, a European type of political party system has not yet evolved and the struggle has been not only between different cliques of ruling families backed by great commercial wealth, but also between these rich groups on the one hand and

the judges and the persons amenable to their jurisdiction, shall be exercised by the courts of various classes and degrees. The limits of the judges' powers, the conditions governing the exercise of these powers and the irremovability of judges shall be fixed by law. Judges shall be independent in the exercise of their functions. The decisions and judgments of all courts shall be rendered and executed in the name of the Lebanese people.

Art. 21. Every Lebanese citizen who has completed his twenty-first year and fulfills the conditions laid down by the electoral law shall be an elector.

CHAPTER II—THE LEGISLATIVE POWER

Art. 22 *(abrogated October 25, 1927.)*

Art. 23 *(abrogated October 25, 1927.)*

Art. 24 *(as amended October 25, 1927, and January 21, 1947.)* The Chamber of Deputies shall consist of elected members. Their number and the manner of election shall be determined by the electoral laws in force.

Art. 25 *(as amended January 21, 1947.)* Should the Chamber of Deputies be dissolved, the instrument ordering dissolution must call upon the electors to take part in new elections, which must be held in accordance with Article 24 and within a period not exceeding three months.

CHAPTER III—PROVISIONS RELATIVE TO THE CHAMBER

Art. 26 *(as amended October 25, 1927.)* The Chamber and the Executive Power shall sit at Beirut.

Art. 27 *(as amended October 25, 1927, and January 21, 1947.)* A member of the Chamber shall be deemed to represent the whole nation. No binding mandate may be imposed upon him by his electors.

Art. 28 *(as amended October 25, 1927, and May 8, 1929.)* A Deputy may also at the same time discharge the functions of Minister. Ministers may be selected either from among the members of the Chamber or from persons outside the Chamber.

Art. 29 *(as amended October 25, 1927.)* The cases in which persons are disqualified from becoming Deputies shall be determined by law.

Art. 32 (as amended January 27, 1947). The Chamber of Deputies shall alone be competent to decide on the validity of the election of members. No member may be invalidated except by a majority of two-thirds of the votes of the whole Assembly.

Art. 33 (as amended October 27, 1946). Meetings of the Chamber outside the period of session fixed by law shall be unlawful and ipso facto null and void.

Art. 34 (as amended October 27, 1946). The Chamber shall hold two ordinary sessions each year. The first shall open on the first Tuesday following March 15th and shall terminate at the end of the month of May. The second shall open on the first Tuesday following October 15th. It shall be primarily devoted to the discussion and adoption of the budget. It shall last until the end of the year.

Art. 35 (as amended October 27, 1946). The ordinary sessions shall begin and end automatically on the dates fixed in Article 34.

The President of the Republic may convene the Chamber in extraordinary session. The date of the opening and termination of extraordinary sessions shall be fixed by Decree.

The agenda shall be fixed in the Decree summoning the Chamber to assemble.

The President of the Republic shall be required to summon the Chamber of Deputies to assemble at the request of an absolute majority of its lawful members.

Art. 36 (as amended October 27, 1946). The Chamber shall not be validly constituted unless the majority of its lawful members are present.

Decisions shall be taken by a majority vote. Should the votes be equal, the question under discussion shall be rejected.

Art. 37 (as amended October 27, 1946). The discussions of the Chamber shall be public. Nevertheless, at the request of the Government or of five of its members, the Chamber shall meet in private. It shall decide later whether the discussion on the same question is to be continued in public.

Art. 38. Votes shall be given verbally or by the members rising or remaining in their seats, except in the case of elections, when a secret vote shall be taken. In the case of all draft laws and when

37 Docs 3-4 (no date) 1953 MI Middle East
LEBANON ME

§46 §47 the question of confidence is raised, the vote shall always be taken by roll-call and verbally.

Art. 37 (as amended October 17, 1927, and May 8, 1929). Every Deputy is fully entitled during ordinary and extraordinary sessions to call upon Ministers to justify their action.

A proposal of this kind may not be discussed and voted upon until at least five days after it is submitted to the Assembly and communicated to the Minister or Ministers concerned.

Art. 38 (as amended October 17, 1927). No bill which has been rejected by the Chamber may be re-introduced during the same session.

Art. 39 (as amended October 17, 1927). No member of the Chamber may be prosecuted or steps taken for his arrest in respect of opinions expressed or votes given by him during the term of his mandate.

Art. 40 (as amended October 17, 1927). During the session, no member of the Chamber may be prosecuted or arrested for a criminal offence without the authorization of the Chamber, unless he is taken in the act.

Art. 41 (as amended October 17, 1927, and January 21, 1947). In the event of a vacancy occurring in the Chamber, the seat shall be filled within two months. The new member's term of office shall terminate with the expiry of his predecessor's term of office. The vacancy shall not be filled if the mandate of the Chamber has less than six months to run.

Art. 42 (as amended October 17, 1927). General elections for the renewal of the Assembly and the designation of appointed Deputies shall take place within the sixty days preceding the expiry of their mandate.

Art. 43 (as amended October 17, 1927). The Chamber shall draw up its own rules of procedure.

Art. 44 (as amended October 17, 1927, and January 21, 1947). Every time a new Chamber is elected and at the opening of the October session, the Chamber, under the presidency of its oldest member, the two youngest members acting as secretaries, shall elect separately, by secret ballot and by an absolute majority of the votes cast, a President, Vice-President and two Secretaries. At the third

57; Davis S-4 (no date)[1955] MI Middle East
Lebanon MI

ballot, a relative majority shall be sufficient. Should the votes be equal, the oldest candidates shall be elected. §43

Art. 45 *(as amended October 17, 1927).* Members of the Chamber shall only vote if they are present at the meeting; voting by proxy shall not be allowed.

Art. 46 *(as amended October 17, 1927).* The Chamber alone has the right to maintain order at its meetings through its President.

Art. 47. *(as amended October 17, 1927).* All petitions to the Chamber must be made and submitted in writing. They may not be presented in person or at the bar of the Chamber.

Art. 48. *(as amended October 17, 1927).* The remuneration of members of the Chamber shall be determined by law.

CHAPTER IV—THE EXECUTIVE POWER

Art. 49 *(as amended October 17, 1927, May 8, 1929, and June 21, 1947).* The Chamber of Deputies shall elect the President of the Republic by secret ballot and by a two-thirds majority of the votes. After the first ballot, an absolute majority shall be sufficient. The President shall be elected for a term of six years.* He may be re-elected only after an interval of six years. No person shall be eligible for the office of President of the Republic unless he fulfils the conditions of eligibility for the Chamber of Deputies. §43 §43

Art. 50. Before assuming office, the President of the Republic shall take an oath of fidelity before Parliament to the Lebanese Nation and the Constitution, in the following terms:

"I swear by Almighty God to observe the Constitution and laws of the Lebanese People and to maintain the independence of the Lebanon and its territorial integrity."

Art. 51 *(as amended October 17, 1927).* The President of the Republic shall promulgate laws after they have been adopted by the Chamber. He shall supervise their execution and for that purpose he shall have the power to issue regulations, but not to modify the actual laws or set aside their provisions.

He shall have the right to pardon. Amnesties may not be granted except by law.

Art. 52 *(as amended October 17, 1927, and November 6, 1943).* The President of the Republic shall negotiate and ratify treaties. He

*See the Provisional Constitutional Law of May 21, 1926, art. 1 (p. 308 below).—Ed.

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In Lebanon the preparations for the elections took longer to complete. The main question at issue was that of the distribution of seats in the new Chamber. It was agreed that the Chamber should consist only of elected members, not on previously of a majority of elected and a minority of nominated ones; but Dr. Tabit's suggestions for allocating seats between the sects were opposed by the Moslems. M. Helou, who had succeeded General Catroux as Delegate-General in June, was compelled to replace Dr. Tabit by Petro Trad; and finally an agreed settlement was reached by which the Christian sects would have 50 seats and the Moslems 25.

Elections were held at the end of August. As in previous elections, the differences between the candidates were largely personal; but there was also a conflict of principle involved, the more extreme supporters of Lebanese independence, with Emile Eddé as their most prominent figure, being opposed by the more moderate advocates of autonomy, led by Bishara al-Khuri, and the Arab nationalists. The former were completely defeated in spite of the support given them by the French authorities. On September 21st the Chamber met and elected Bishara al-Khuri President of the Republic by 44 votes to 26.

The new President asked Riyadh as-Solh to form a Ministry. A Sunni Moslem, by origin from Southern Lebanon, Riyadh as-Solh had for long been recognised as one of the leaders of the Arab nationalists in Lebanon, and had been an associate of Shukri al-Quwatli in the "Istiqlal" group.

The new Ministry was composed as follows :—

Prime Minister and Minister of Finance	Riyadh as-Solh.
Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Justice and Education	Khalil Abu Shahla.
Minister of the Interior and of Posts and Telegraphs	Chevalier Chamoun.
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Public Works	Sabri Tayla.
Minister of Defence and Hygiene	Amin Majid Arslan.
Minister of Food Supply and National Economy	Adil Osayran.

of the minority problem contained in it was satisfactory. When the Treaty was ratified, it would firmly establish on a contractual basis a French influence which the far-long maintenance of an authoritarian régime might in the long run compromise.

3

In Lebanon the signature of the Franco-Lebanese Treaty was welcomed by the Maronites and many other sections of the population. The Sunnis, however, regarded it as a blow to their aim of reunion with Syria; their anger found expression in communal clashes in Beirut and elsewhere at the end of 1936. In spite of their opposition, however, steps were immediately taken to carry out the policy of the Treaty by re-establishing self-governing institutions. The Constitution of 1926 was restored in January, 1937; the Chamber met, and Khair ad-Din al-Ahdab, a Sunni, formed a Ministry. But it soon became apparent that the signature of the Treaty and the revival of constitutional forms had not affected the essential nature of Lebanese political life, which continued to be dominated by sectarian issues.

A new electoral law was passed in 1937, replacing the existing Chamber by a new and larger one, two-thirds elected on a sectarian basis and one-third nominated. The elections of November, 1937, were marked by corruption on an extensive scale; and the Chamber which resulted from them, and which remained in being until 1939, was remarkable only for the bitterness and complexity of its internal dissensions. The Ministries of the Amir Khalid Shihab and Abdallah al-Yafi succeeded those of Khair ad-Din al-Ahdab, and none of them had any sensible legislative or other advance to show.

The consequence of this was a general loss of interest and faith in the constitutional system as it existed in Lebanon. It was not simply that the established leaders and the parliamentary parties, the Chamber, Constitutionalists and so on, ceased to possess even so limited a hold over public opinion as they had perhaps had; more than that, Lebanese began to ask themselves what purpose was served by the existence of a costly Parliament, filled with landowners and lawyers, wasting its time in sectarian quarrels and showing no effective interest in the country's welfare. Had not Lebanon been better ruled under the simple system which had existed